United Nations CEDAW/C/BGD/8

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
29 May 2015

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

Eighth periodic report of States parties due in 2015

Bangladesh*

[Date received: 14 April 2015]

Note: The present document is being circulated in English, French and Spanish only.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

15-08472 (E) 240615

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Abbreviations

ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
ANC	Ante-Natal Care
AICC	Agricultural Information and Communication Council
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ART	Anti-Retroviral Therapy
ARV	Anti-retro Viral (drug)
ASPR	Annual Sector Performance Report
ASA	Association for Social Advancement
BB	Bangladesh Bank
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BCCSAP	Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan
BDHS	Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey
BGB	Border Guard Bangladesh
BKSP	Bangladesh Krira Shikhkha Protisthan
BMET	Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
BMI	Body Mass Index
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BRDB	Bangladesh Rural Development Board
BSA	Bangladesh Shishu Academy
BSCIC	Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation
BURO	Basic Unit for Resources and Opportunities
CCGAP	Climate Change and Gender Action Plan
CDMP	Comprehensive Disaster Management Plan
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CFIS	Child Friendly Investigation Skills
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CPF	Community Policing Forum
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Child

CSBA	Community Skilled Birth Attendants
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAE	Department of Agriculture Extension
DGHS	Directorate General of Health Services
DLAC	District Legal Aid Committees
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
DRR	Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation
DV	Domestic Violence
DWA	Department of Women Affairs
EC	Election Commission
EPI	Expanded Program on Immunization
EPICES	EPI Coverage Evaluation Survey
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
FFW	Food for Work
FFE	Food for Education
FPU	Female Police Unit
FTI	Forensic Training Institute
FWV	Family Welfare Visitor
FY	Fiscal Year
GB	Grameen Bank
GDP	Gross Domestic product
GEI	Gender Equity Index
GPS	Government Primary Schools
GRB	Gender Responsive Budget
GRP	Gender Responsive Planning
GS	Grameen Shakti
HB	Health Bulletin
HDI	Human Development Index
HFWC	Health and family Welfare Centre
HIES	House Income Expenditure Survey
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPN	Health, Population and Nutrition
HNPSDP	Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Development Program

HNPSP	Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Program
IC	Information Commission
ICS	Improved Cook Stoves
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTD	Information and Communication Technology Division
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
LC	Law Commission
LFP	Labour Force Participation
JATI	Judicial Administration Training Institute
JMS	Jatiyo Mahila Sangastha
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFI	Micro Finance Institution
MFLO	Muslim Family Law Ordinance
MHVS	Maternal Health Voucher Scheme
MIDAS	Micro Industries Development Assistance and Services
MOEWOE	Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MOHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MOI	Ministry of Information
MOLJPA	Ministry of Law Justice and Parliamentary Affairs
MOP	Ministry of Planning
MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MOSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MOWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MOYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
MP	Member of the Parliament
MSP-VAW	Multi-Sectoral Programme on Violence against Women
NAP	National Action Plan

NAP VAW	National Action Plan on Violence against Women
NCCD	National Council for Children Development
NCTB	National Curriculum and Text Book Board
NCWCD	National Council for Women and Children Development
NEP	National Education Policy
NGO	Non-governmental Organizations
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
NPA	National Plan of Action
NSDC	National Skills Development Council
NSDP	National Skills Development Policy
NWM	National Women Machinery
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NIPORT	National Institute of Population Research and Training
NLASO	National Legal Aid Services Organization
NNS	National Nutrition Services
NPWA	National Policy for Women Advancement
OCC	One Stop Crisis Centre
OMS	Open market sale
PC	Planning Commission
PEDP	Primary Education Development Program
PKSF	Pally Karma Shahayak Foundation
PNC	Post Natal Care
PSC	Parliamentary Standing Committee
PSHTA	Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act
PWD	Person with Disability
RAB	Rapid Action Battalion
RDRS	Rangpur Dinanjpur Rural Services
RDA	Rural Development Academy
RMG	Ready-Made Garments
RPO	Representation of People's Ordinance
RRRI	Rescue, Recovery, Repatriation and Integration

RTI	Right to Information
RIA	Right to Information Act
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAIEVAC	South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children
SC	The Supreme Court
SFYP	Sixth Five Year Plan
SHS	Solar Home System
SMC	School Management Committee
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
SSNP	Social Safety Net Program
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
SVRS	Sample Vital Registration System
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
TMSS	Thengamara Mohila Shobuj Shangha
TT	Tetanus Toxoid
TTC	Teachers' Training College
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UP	Union Parishad
UZP	Upazilla Parishad
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
UNCRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities
VAW	Violence against Women
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development
VGF	Vulnerable Group Feeding
VSC	Victim Support Centre
VTE	Vocational and Technical Education
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation
WWD	Women with Disability

WDP	Women Development Policy
WID	Women in Development
WMCA	Water Management Cooperative Association
WIDFP	Women in Development Focal Point
WIDFPIEC	Women in Development Focal Point Implementation and Evaluation Committee
WIDFPCC	Women in Development Focal Point Coordination Committee
WIDFPNC	Women in Development Focal Point Network Committee

Introduction

1. Bangladesh ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1984 and has submitted seven progress reports on its implementation and participated in meetings of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (herein after the Committee). The 6th and 7th combined report, submitted in 2009 was considered by the Committee in 2011.

2. Bangladesh signed many international human rights conventions, treaties, agreements and instruments, endorsed the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) and adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration 2000, and committed to the goals and targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Bangladesh participated in periodic regional and global review processes and reported on progress of its international developmental commitments, and the Universal Periodic Reports (UPR). Actions to implement such commitments have yielded remarkable achievements on different socio-economic indicators including those on women's advancement. Significant improvements in social development and gender equality indicators are marked. According to the Social Progress Index 2014 by Social Progress Imperatives, the score of Bangladesh was 52.04, higher compared to that of Nepal, India and Pakistan.

3. The period since the submission of the last periodic report has been marked by actions by the Government and civil society, yielding significant progress in women's advancement and gender equality. Mainstreaming of gender in macro-economic framework, policies, plans and programmes has brought effective and substantial changes in women's lives. The partnership and cooperation with Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and private sector has been strengthened and public private partnership has played an important role in advancing women's development.

4. The Government's Vision 2021 sets targets for Bangladesh by the end of 2021. A Perspective Plan 2010-2021 incorporated strategies to operationalize the Vision to transform Bangladesh from a low income economy to a middle income economy. The targets of the Perspective Plan will be achieved through two consecutive Five Year Plans. The first one, the Sixth Five Year Plan (SFYP) 2011-2015 was developed in line with the Vision 2021 and the MDGs. Its time coincides with the period after submission of the last report on CEDAW. Policy and strategic measures of the SFYP aim to increase women's participation in economic, political and social life, remove the existing barriers of women's advancement and to protect and uphold women's rights.

Outline of the Report

5. This Report has been prepared according to the Harmonized Reporting Guideline on the form and content of reports to be submitted by States parties to the International Human Rights Treaties HRI/GEN/2/Rev.5, 29 May 2008, Convention-Specific Reporting Guidelines of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW/SP/2008/INF/1, 8 July 2008 and Compilation of Guidelines on the Form and Content of Reports to be Submitted by States Parties to the International Human Rights Treaties, HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6, 3 June 2009.

6. The Report consists of two sections:

- **Section I**: Background Framework (Common Core Document) containing information of a general and factual nature and addresses the Concluding Observations.
- **Section II**: Convention-specific document that provides additional information on the implementation of the Convention.

Section I: Reporting Process on CEDAW at the National Level

7. The 8th progress reporting period coincides with the 20 years' review of the Beijing Platform for Action, conclusion of MDG and the preparation of the post-2015 development agenda. Participatory consultation with Government ministries and CSO representatives, the national-level review of the implementation of the BPFA, the recent review of the Sixth Five Year Plan, and data and information from Ministries and CSOs were the basis of the report. Consultation with Bangladeshi member of UN-CEDAW Committee was held. Information on the implementation status on the concluding observations of the UN-CEDAW Committee on the Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic report were collected for the period of January 2010-December 2014 by circulating a survey format to all Ministries. A working Group formed by Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) officials coordinated the process of the report preparation. The Process began in March 2014 and in December the timeline and process of reporting was shared with the representatives of all the Ministries and major CSOs. A committee comprising government and CSO representatives was formed. Another meeting in January 2015 shared the first draft of the report. Feedbacks and inputs received from the CSOs and ministries were incorporated in the final report.

8. The methodology of the review included:

- review of documents including national progress reports on international conventions, UPR, and the draft background paper of the 7th Five Year Plan;
- review of websites of ministries, department, UN agencies, and others;
- collection and compilation of data and statistics;
- collection of information from the ministries; and
- meetings with representatives of ministries and CSOs.

9. A limitation of this report was the lack of updated national data. Relevant important national surveys and the census were conducted in 2010 and 2011. Updated figures were available in limited cases. Therefore, smaller surveys, estimates, review reports were also considered.

Information on Non-Discrimination and Equality and Effective Remedies

10. In addition to legal measures to maintain equality, equal protection of law; and non-discrimination, institutions and measures are in place as follows:

11. **National Council for Women and Children Development (NCWCD)**: National Council for Women Development (NCWD), chaired by the Honourable Prime Minister and consisting of representatives of government, civil society, and women's organizations was merged in 2009 with the National Council for Child Development (NCCD) and was named the National Council for Women and

Children Development (NCWCD). The NCWCD provides policy guidance and monitors the implementation of critical policy decisions on women's and children's development.

12. **Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA)**: MOWCA is the nodal ministry for gender governance and acts as the lead ministry in promoting gender equality. MOWCA coordinates the response by all government agencies to the needs and priorities of women and implements policies and programmes through its three agencies, Department of Women Affairs (DWA), Jatiya Mohila Shangstha (JMS) and Bangladesh Shishu Academy (BSA). A Policy Leadership and Advocacy Unit (PLAU) provides technical support to MOWCA in coordinating women's advancement activities within the Government. The Annex D shows the existing institutional mechanism.

13. **Other mechanisms**: Other institutional mechanisms such as Parliamentary Standing Committee for MOWCA and Women In Development Focal Point (WIDFP), WIDFP Implementation and Evaluation Committee (WIDFPIEC), Women In Development Focal Point Coordination Committee (WIDFPCC) and Women In Development Focal Point Network Committee (WIDFPNC) are in place. The WIDFPs of all ministries lead to address gender concerns within the policies and plans of their respective ministries.

14. **Development Plans**: Equality is promoted through implementation of development plans. The Perspective Plan (2010-2021) provides framework for the implementation of the Government's Vision 2021. The Sixth Five Year Plan (SFYP), 2011-2015 is now under implementation.

15. **Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting**: The Recurrent, Capital, Gender and Poverty (RCGP) model for budget analysis with scope for multi-year planning was introduced in 2009. A Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) with performance criteria on women's advancement and gender equality was adopted. The Ministries are to provide estimates of budget allocation for gender equality and poverty reduction within the sectoral policy aligned with the identified priority areas. A report with action of all ministries is submitted to the Parliament on the progress of GRB during the Budget Session. The process helped to create awareness about the gender and prevent discrimination against women. The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council in collaboration with MOWCA issued guideline in 2009 on Gender Responsive Planning and Review, guiding on how to address gender in development interventions.

16. To ensure equality of women, the WDP was formulated and the National Action Plan (NAP) was developed in 2013. The WDP incorporates provisions for promoting equality and non-discrimination in all spheres of life (Annex-C). The NAP provides guidelines for the implementation of the Policy. MOWCA has formulated National Action Plan to prevent Violence Against Women and Children 2013-2025 to protect and ensure women's human rights.

17. The Government has directed to include mother's name in all official documents. In 2009, the High Court ruled to insert mother's name in school admission forms, either alone or with that of the father. The specific steps taken to promote equality have been discussed in Section II.

Section II: Convention-specific document

18. This Section contains the Convention-specific document covering the period January 2010 to December 2014. The last Report submitted in 2009 was considered by the Committee in January 2011. This report addresses the Concluding Observations of the Committee and provides additional information by Articles of CEDAW.

1. *Implementation of Concluding Observations on the Sixth and Seventh Periodic Report*

19. This sub-section of the Report provides information on the measures adopted for implementation of the Concluding Observations to the Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Report and explanations for the non-implementation or difficulties encountered. Some relevant additional statistics are presented in Annex E.

Reservations

20. Withdrawal of existing reservation on Article 2 and Article 16 (1) c was considered and the LC was requested to review the merit of the reservation and to provide appropriate recommendations. Following the examples of other Muslim Countries, the LC opined, "The Government of Bangladesh withdraws her reservation from Article 2 and Article 16.1 (c) of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. However, Bangladesh shall apply the provisions of these articles in compatibility and harmony with her Constitution and existing laws". The Government is considering the recommendation.

21. **Challenges**: The Government is aware about the potential movements by the Islamic fundamentalist groups against the withdrawal of the reservations. Therefore, cautious steps are being taken so as not to jeopardize application of the principles of CEDAW. Partnership and cooperation with civil society is essential to create a positive environment for the withdrawal of reservation.

Legislation on discrimination against women

22. The constitution guarantees equal rights of men and women (article 28(2) in all spheres of state and of public life. Other legal and policy initiatives like WDP, NAP also promote equality and eliminate discrimination against women.

23. **Challenges**: The personal laws are in light with the religious provisions of different religious faiths, which in some cases have discriminatory provisions in marriage and divorce, inheritance, guardianship, etc. Modification of personal laws needs agreements by the leaders of all religious faiths. The society is not yet ready to accept such modification and the Government being mindful of the possible repercussion of the conservative religious groups, taking cautious steps.

Discriminatory laws and harmonizing domestic legislation

24. Most of the civil laws are consistent with the CEDAW and the Government has modified several laws by eliminating discriminatory provisions against women and some new laws enacted, including the Citizenship Act, Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act and Control of Pornography Act. Women activists, women's organizations, civil society personnel, human right organizations and NGOs are participating in the process.

25. **Challenges**: Reviewing all laws is a challenge as modification of some of the laws requires agreement of leaders of all the religions, which is difficult within the socio-religious context. Therefore, the Government is proceeding watchfully. The social norms often nurture inequalities and the inequality in some personal laws outweighs the equality in civil laws. Despite the Government's commitments to eliminate discrimination against women, they still cannot enjoy the rights under the existing laws due to the lack of enforcement, their lack of knowledge, the cost and time involved in legal processes and the patriarchal attitude of and lack of commitment by the members of judiciary and law enforcement agencies.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

26. **Awareness Raising**: Mass awareness raising programs, campaigns and advocacy initiatives in partnership with NGOs, media and local government aim to change social norms, stereo-types, and promote equality of girls and boys, and to recognize the social worth of the girl child. Programmes also aim at eliminating harmful practices like child marriage, dowry, and violence. The Government has drafted an action plan to prevent child marriage in December, 2014 and currently preparing for wider consultation. National Text Book Board (NCTB) reviewed 24 books with gender lens until 2012 and conducted research on gender based violence in education environment. Curriculum and Textbook developers, school teachers, teacher training instructors have been trained on gender sensitivity in school system. Parents, guardians, local administrators, religious leaders are also oriented on reducing discrimination and violence against women.

27. The media raises awareness against social stereotypes but at times projects the roles tradiiionally expected of men and women. The National Broadcasting Policy, 2014 intends to strengthen broadcasting for development and portrayal of women's productive roles. Use of mother's name in key documents recognizes the role of women. Release of postal stamps, use of short messages on envelopes and cards are also important steps. Training on gender has been incorporated in the government staff training courses. DWA has organized 379 clubs for adolescents at the upazila levels to enhance girls' life skills. A National Children's Taskforce at the district and national level elicits children's views and promotes their roles as stakeholders.

28. **Preventing harmful practice**: Eve teasing has been incorporated as a punishable offence in the Mobile Court Act, 2009 empowering the magistrate to hold summary trial procedure to control harassment of girls. Media raises awareness against eve teasing and the Parent Teacher Associations work against it. A Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2014 has been drafted with provision of punishment for parents or guardian and the marriage registrar, and compulsory production of the birth registration certificate during marriage. A CSO alliance called 'Girls not Brides' is working to eliminate child marriage together with the Government. Local Government institutions work against dowry.

29. The Hon'ble Prime Minister committed at the Girl's Summit in London to develop a plan of action by 2014 to end child marriage, revise the Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929 by 2015, ensure that no marriage takes place below the age of 15 by 2021, reduce the number of girls getting married between 15 and 18 by more than one third by 2021 and end child marriage completely by 2041.

30. **Challenges**: Despite the different initiatives, the harmful practices prevail and girls and women are subordinated. Son preference is observed. Some of the norms are

imbedded within the religious practices and therefore, the society is not yet ready to accept changes and some more time is necessary to change the social norms.

Violence against women (VAW)

31. **Legal and policy measures**: Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, approved in 2010 (herein after DV Act) criminalizes VAW. Rules of Procedure to implement the Act, has been approved in 2013. The Mobile Court Act, 2009 and other existing laws in effect also addresses different aspects of VAW. A national action plan on VAW (NAPVAW) 2013-2025, developed jointly with civil society outlines actions against VAW. The High Court in 2010 provided guidelines to employers and educational institutions to form policies to address sexual harassment in work places, educational institutions and other public places. The High Court also directed the Government to enact legislation to address sexual harassment in public places. In 2011, the Appellate Division of the SC declared that *fatwa* could be issued on "religious matters", but not to impose punishment. The Pornography Control Act, 2012 declares any pornographic recording and broadcasting as criminal offence. The Act has a separate section for child pornography and it empowers the Court to take expert opinion/help from IT experts. The DV Act and its implementation have been integrated in the training curriculum of the judicial staff and law enforcing agencies.

32. **Support services**: The Multi-Sectoral Program on Violence Against Women (MSP-VAW) provides health care, police assistance, DNA test, social services, legal assistance, psychological counselling and shelter for the woman victims through 8 One-stop Crisis Centres (OCCs). One Stop Crisis Cells (OCCs) in sixty areas provide information and referral services. A National Forensic DNA Profiling Laboratory, a National Trauma Counselling Centre and Seven Victim Support Centres (VSC) have been established to provide legal support, medication, counselling, and emergency shelter to women and children victims. The Acid Control Council Committee and 63 district committees support the acid victims. Cyber Nirapotta (Cyber Crime Safety) Programme oriented 2,839 female college students about cyber security in 2014.

33. The Police Headquarters has set up 'Special Cell' comprising female police personnel and a Women Support and Investigation Division. A Women's Investigation Division established in 2011 under Dhaka Metropolitan Police is a specialized unit to investigate cases under the Women and Children Repression Act, 2000 (Amendment 2003). Community Policing Forum (CPF) operating in 64 districts includes 33 per cent women and cooperates with the community in dealing with sexual harassment and domestic violence. Thirty two out of 35 Model Thanas have women police officers.

34. **Survey, data base and monitoring**: MOWCA operates a central cell to coordinate work on combating VAW and established Committees for the Prevention of VAW at district and upazila (sub-district) levels. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) has also set up an 'Acid Cases Monitoring Cell' and a special fund to assist victims of acid attacks. Since 2010, the Cell in the Police Headquarters monitored some 433 cases of acid violence. Of the 506 victims across the country 303 were women, 69 were children. A web-based Integrated Crime Data Management System at the Police Headquarters preserves every reported incidence of violence. A national survey on VAW carried out in 2011 by Bangladesh Bureau of

Statistics (BBS) found that 87 per cent of the respondents faced violence in the previous 12 months in one way or other. The survey considered the nine indicators on VAW agreed by UN Statistics Commission.

Table 1
Number of Cases for VAW from Police Headquarters (June 2013-February 2014)

Category	*June 2013*	*July 2013*	*Aug 2013*	*Sep 2013*	*Oct 2013*	*Nov 2013*	*Dec 2013*	*Jan 2014*	*Feb 2014*	*Total*
Dowry	657	593	522	616	533	446	362	374	367	4 470
Acid	14	9	9	12	6	2	5	4	4	65
Abduction	366	285	273	408	319	338	253	265	291	2 798
Rape	370	345	254	375	297	264	171	177	214	2 467
Homicide/injured after rape	0	4	0	1	2	4	1	1	2	15
Murder	31	22	26	14	18	21	15	14	14	175
Injured	18	16	8	19	26	5	12	8	11	123
Other forms of VAW	465	480	383	362	309	306	215	190	246	2 956
Total	**1 921**	**1 754**	**1 475**	**1 807**	**1 510**	**1 386**	**1 034**	**1 033**	**1 149**	**13 069**

Source: www.mspvaw.gov.bd.

35. **Collaboration and cooperation**: In collaboration with NGOs, the Government supports rescue, repatriation and rehabilitation programs for child and women victims. Bangladesh is one of the members of the South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC).

36. **Challenges**: Despite taking measures, increased number of cases of VAW in public and domestic spheres is reported. It is also evident that more cases are reported as a result of awareness raising. The people are still tolerant of VAW and women generally are reluctant to report cases in fear of social stigma. Addressing the socio-cultural factors that make women vulnerable is a challenge and requires immediate attention and long-term commitment. Some members of the law enforcement agencies are also of traditional mindset and therefore, the enforcement of the laws and policies remains a major challenge. Government resources are limited to provide shelter and legal support to all victims.

Trafficking and sexual exploitation

37. **Legislation and plans**: The Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act (PSHTA) was approved in 2012 to address all forms of trafficking. The PSHTA identifies human trafficking as an offence against the state and provides for investigation as an organized crime. It allows investigation by a group of people covering different jurisdictions, extra-territorial jurisdiction, provision of safe custody and witness protection services. A National Plan of Action 2012-14 on combating Human Trafficking has been adopted encompassing all dimension of human trafficking. To implement the PSHTA, a set of Rules were drafted in collaboration with the civil society organizations. As per advice of the Ministry of

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA), MoHA is currently working to finalize it.

38. In 2013, prosecution of 215 trafficking cases was initiated compared to 94 in 2012. In 2013, 84 cases of sex trafficking and two cases of forced labour were investigated under the PSHTA. Fourteen traffickers were convicted in 2013, five of them convicted to life imprisonment, eight to ten years' imprisonment, and one to four months' imprisonment (TIP report 2014). The length of Bangladesh's border with India and Myanmar makes it difficult to control people crossing the borders. The Boarder Guard Bangladesh (BGB) apprehended 2,235 women and 817 children at the border while being trafficked to neighbouring countries between 2010-14.

39. **Regional cooperation**: Bangladeshi officials collaborate with Indian authorities on the repatriation of Bangladeshi women and child trafficking victims through a shared standard operating procedure. A review of the SAARC Convention was done in collaboration with IOM and a proposal was prepared to raise at the SAARC level for consideration of widening the scope of the Convention to integrate other reasons of human trafficking other than for prostitution.

40. **Support services**: Trafficked victims are supported through nine shelter homes, drop-in centres, and safe homes administered by the NGOs, MOWCA and Ministry of Social Welfare (MOSW). The Government operates shelters in its embassy in Riyadh and consulate in Jeddah for female Bangladeshi workers fleeing abusive employers (TIP). MOHA in collaboration with NGOs has finalized standard operating procedure (SOP) for Rescue, Recovery, Repatriation and Integration (RRRI) to ensure support services for victims of trafficking. Good practice of South Asian countries were considered while drafting the SOP. A core committee is reviewing the document for approval.

41. **Awareness and training**: A series of sensitization and capacity-building trainings were organized in collaboration with development partners and NGOs for law enforcement agencies (e.g. police, Border Guard of Bangladesh and Coast Guard). A total of 397 BGB members have participated in the training by MoHA which taught the techniques of behaviour with the victims and on Child Friendly Interview Skills (CFIS). BGB conducted workshops and seminars for local government, police, magistrate, members of electronic and print media along with BGB personnel to prevent women and children trafficking. A booklet on the PSHTA was distributed among police stations, public prosecutors, lawyers and judges.

42. **Monitoring**: MoHA has set up a Taskforce for RRRI of victims of trafficking, especially women and children. An Inter-ministerial Committee under MoHA coordinates the ongoing efforts in preventing human trafficking where civil society representatives are included. Similar committees have been formed at district, upazila and union levels. A monitoring cell functions at the Criminal Investigation Department, Police Headquarters. Similar Cells also function in each district to monitor criminal prosecution of human trafficking. Bangladesh has graduated from "Tier 2 Watch List" to "Tier 2" in the US State Department Report on Trafficking in Persons. The TIP report is prepared every year in collaboration with NGOs. MoHA has set up a separate website for information on trafficking. Also web-based Integrated Crime Data Management System has been installed at Police Headquarters Monitoring Cell to preserve all information of trafficking cases and victims.

43. **Challenges**: A tribunal has not yet been established for the PSHTA, which makes the legal process lengthy. Normally the victims try to cross the borders with the perpetrators without informing others and the law enforcement agencies remain in the dark. Inadequate documentation and information make law enforcement difficult. Government resources are limited to provide shelter and rehabilitation needs of the victims. Bi-lateral treaties have not yet been reached with other countries, to ease the rescue, repatriation and protection process. The coverage of SAARC Convention is limited only to trafficking for prostitution and expansion its coverage is taking time. The extreme climate change and environmental events like cyclone, river erosion etc. make women and children vulnerable to trafficking, which is often out of the Government's control. Victims are sometimes charged with prostitution or immoral behaviour and put in jail in other countries.

Participation in political and public life

44. **Constitutional, legal and policy provisions**: As mentioned in Section I Bangladesh has reserved seats in the Parliament and local government institutions and women can also contest in general sets and in all elections. The total number of women members including the 50 Members in reserved seats in the current Parliament is 70, which represent 20 per cent in the total members. The Constitution also allows special provision or quota of women in all areas. There is a total of 50 Parliamentary Standing Committees with a total of 509 members of whom 428 are male and 81 are female. In the current Cabinet, there are 3 women Ministers.

45. **Political Parties**: The major political parties though are led by women; women are very few in leadership in party hierarchy. Women normally occupy seats in committees on education, health, women and children and are less likely to be on organizing, economics, budget, and foreign affairs. The RPO 2013 and WDP emphasize on ensuring 33 per cent representation inside the political parties and recommends that political parties nominate women at increased rates in the election. The RPO recommends increasing nomination of women to 30 per cent in elections by 2020. The RPO requires that a political party constitution does not include any discriminatory clauses regarding religion, race, caste, language or sex to qualify for registration.

46. **Local government**: The local government acts allocate reserved seats for women equivalent to one third of general seats in all local government bodies. About 42,000 women participated in the local level 4552 UPs and three women elected members are in each of the UP. For the first time, a woman was elected as Mayor of a City Corporation in 2011. In the UZP elections of 2014 in 458 upazilas 1,509 women candidates participated, which amounted to 3.4 women candidates per UZP. Women have been elected in all upazilas as vice chairpersons.

47. Other rules and policies also encourage women in decision making and in participating in public life. Women are to constitute 30 per cent of the members in Water Management Cooperative Associations (WMCA), Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) Committees and 40 per cent of the Co-management Committees of forests. Similar provisions have been made in other sectors also.

48. **Capacity-building**: Elected women representative of the local Government are trained through National Institute of Local Government (NILG) and Local government Engineering Department (LGED). The Local Government Division has issued guidelines to involve women local government members in one fourth of all

committees as chair. Orientation programme has been undertaken for women members of the Parliament in cooperation with development partners.

49. **Other positive steps**: The Hon'ble Prime Minister is a woman. For the first time, a woman has been appointed as the Speaker of the Parliament. The Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader and Whip of the House in the Parliament are women. Two women have been appointed as Vice Chancellors of public universities. Eight women are heading missions abroad out of 68 Missions and 3 of them are Ambassadors.

50. **Challenges**: Women's lack of political experience, traditional gender roles are barriers to women performing well in public offices. Although the numbers of women in local government is increasing, their capacity is low in leading and negotiation. Due to the existing social norms and the political practices, women are still not competing in the general seats as expected. There is limitation of resources in order to equip all women representatives to perform their roles effectively. The social norms again prevail in the dynamics of the local government institutions and men do not take women members as equal partners and colleagues.

Nationality

51. The Citizenship Act of 1951 was amended in 2009 allowing a Bangladeshi woman married to a foreigner to pass on her citizenship to their child. A woman's right to pass on her citizenship to her foreign spouse is under consideration.

Education

52. **Education for all**: The National Education Policy (NEP) ensures education for all and commits for qualitative improvement in education sector. Primary education is compulsory and free for all children, free textbooks are given and pre-school class has been opened in all government primary schools. School Feeding Programme supports 2.7 million underprivileged students with food and educational materials. 'Reaching Out-of-School Children' project supports primary education to more than 750,000 dropouts. Bangladesh has already achieved the MDG-2 target of gender parity in primary and secondary school enrolments and primary school enrolment rate has reached up to 99.64 per cent. About 7.87 million poor students receive stipend and 0.50 million students receive education allowance. Creative Intellectual Exploration Policy 2012 provides for recognition of genius students. 30 per cent girls and 10 per cent boy students receive stipend at secondary level.

53. **Priority to girls' education**: Girls' education up to grade XII in public institutions is free. 7.8 million girls in rural areas receive conditional stipends in secondary schools. The Educational Assistance Trust Fund has been established to financially support the poor and meritorious students. In every upazilla 60 per cent school children receive stipends. Increasing literacy rates, enrolment, retention, completion of primary education of girls and reduction of early marriage is evident. 0.133 Million girls received stipend and 0.173 million are selected for stipend. 0.166 working girls receive basic education through the 6,646 education centres. Bangladesh is one of the fifty-four countries with a gender disparity in favour of girls in secondary level.

54. **Primary education**: Better infrastructure, water supply and sanitation facilities, improved curriculum and teaching modality, and inclusive education have

been promoted through the Primary Education Development Programmes. In 2013, girls formed 50 per cent of total students and the net enrolment rate reached (NER) to 98.1 per cent for girls. Primary cycle completion rate improved and internal efficiency reached to 73.5 per cent for boys and 77.2 per cent for girls in 2012 from 57.1 per cent for boys and 62.2 per cent for girls in 2009. The pass rate for girls in primary education has increased from 87.51 per cent in 2009 to 98.5 per cent in 2013. A total of 99.2 million books were delivered to students.

Table 2
Primary Dropout, Survival, NER, Completion Rate and Pass Rate of Girls and Boys

	Dropout Rate		*Survival Rate*		*NER (%)*		*Pass rate*		*Completion rate*	
Years	*Boys*	*Girls*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*Boys*	*Girls*	*Boys*	*Girls*
2009		45.1	57.1	62.2	89.1	99.1	NA	87.51	NA	NA
2010	40.3	39.3	65.9	68.6	92.2	97.6	92.7	91.98	59.8	60.8
2011	32.4	27.0	77.0	82.1	92.7	97.3	97.5	97.08	67.6	73.0
2012	28.3	24.2	73.5	77.2	95.4	98.1	97.5	97.19	71.7	75.8
2013	24.9	17.9		80.5	96.2	98.4	98.6	98.5	75.1	82.1

Source: *Primary School Census, 2012 and Annual Sector Performance Report 2014.*

55. **Secondary Education**: Expansion of stipends for girl students up to grade twelve, free education in public institutions up to grade twelve, better infrastructure, water supply and sanitation facilities have contributed towards higher number of girl students completing secondary education. The secondary school pass rate for girls reached 88.69 per cent (89.87 per cent for boys) in 2013 from 65.07 per cent (69.70 per cent for boys) in 2009. Women having secondary or higher education stood at 30.8 per cent, in comparison to 39.3 per cent for males in 2011.

56. **Technical education**: Six polytechnic institutes have been established to promote women's access to non-traditional fields. Computer laboratory has been established in 3,172 educational institutions and 3,047 ICT laboratories have been set up in the Upazilla Service Centres and educational institutions. Still the proportion of girl students in vocational institutions is less than one third. The quota for female students will increase from 10 per cent to 20 per cent at Diploma in Engineering program from 2014-2015 session. Vocational skills training is imparted under about 10 ministries and many more NGOs. The National Skills Development Policy (NSDP) 2011 emphasized on quality vocational and technical education for women considering market needs and three new projects were initiated. Despite, all the initiatives, enrolment rate of girls in technical and vocational education is only around 27 per cent.

57. **Teacher and training**: By 2013, proportion of female teachers in Government schools rose to 64 per cent from 57 per cent while proportion of head teachers rose from 22 per cent to 42 per cent in 2012. Nearly, a million secondary level teachers have been trained. The policy to recruit 20 per cent women teachers in rural schools and 40 per cent in urban schools at secondary level has been introduced resulting in increase of women teachers from 20 per cent in 2005 to 23 per cent in 2010. Female participation in Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) at Government Teachers' Training Centres (TTC) was 44.7 per cent. The proportion of primary teachers trained to at

least C-in-Ed level reached to 89 per cent in 2012 from 83 per cent in 2010. In-service training has increased but females lag behind males due to women's household responsibilities and social norms.

58. **School management**: At least 2 women (out of 13 members) are involved in School Management Committees (SMC) and 63 per cent of secondary schools achieved this target by June 2012. At least three members of every SMC were trained. In 2013, the GOB nationalised 26,193 private primary schools and 103,845 teachers under the government system. As has been mentioned earlier, the High Court has directed all educational institutions to formulate policy against sexual harassment and to establish complaint Committee and Complaint Box.

59. **Tertiary education**: Asian University for Women has been established. Stipend for Degree (Pass) and Equivalent Level (FSPD) Project provides stipends to 30 per cent female and 10 per cent male students. However, only around 30 per cent students at the tertiary level are female. The pass rate of 33.7 per cent for girls and total pass rate 31.2 per cent at the degree level in 2002 reached at 75.23 per cent for all students and 79.64 for girls in 2011. A total of 12,810 girls received stipend for degree pass and equivalent level education in 2012-13.

60. **Continuing Education**: 552,828 females and 550,336 males received literacy and vocational skills by 2012 through continued education program. Adult literacy is given in collaboration with NGOs particularly in rural areas. As of 2011, 58.81 per cent (62.5 per cent for male and 55.1 per cent for female) adults were literate from 55.3 per cent in 2005 (SVRS), 2011.

61. **Challenges**: Despite all initiatives, the learning outcomes are not yet as expected. The challenge is to retain increasing number of girl students at secondary schools until graduation. Women's participation in technical and tertiary level is low. Still now some children are out of school. The quota of women in teaching contingent and in school management is yet to be fulfilled. The slow growth in adult literacy rate poses a challenge in attaining the MDG target of 100 per cent. A recent trend of reduction of interest of students in science education is a concern.

Employment

62. **Legal and Policy Measures**: The Labour Act, 2006 (revised 2013) provides for decent work environment, right to trade unions, social protection measures. The Export Processing Zone (EPZ) Labour Welfare Association and Industrial Relations Act, 2010 ensures EPZ workers' well-being. The National Industrial Health and Safety Council has drafted an Occupational Safety and Health Policy. One Labour Appeal Tribunal and seven labour courts have been established to mitigate any litigation regarding employment and wages. The WDP provides for women's increased participation of women in the labour market, equal opportunity at the workplace, wage equality and protection. A "Domestic Worker Protection and Welfare Policy, 2010" has been drafted.

63. **Support services and wage**: All public sector employment ensures equal wage and equal benefits of both women and men. The Government announced a wage board in 2013 for fixing minimum pay for garment workers and actions taken to ensure safety in factories. Contractors of the construction sector are contractually obligated to ensure equal wages, however, discrimination exists and the Government runs motivational programmes and monitoring measures to eliminate this. The "Lactating

mother support fund", 44 day care centres in 6 divisional and 13 district towns supports low income working mothers. Seven hostels under DWA and one under JMS provide safe residence to women and two more hostels with capacity of 850 are under construction.

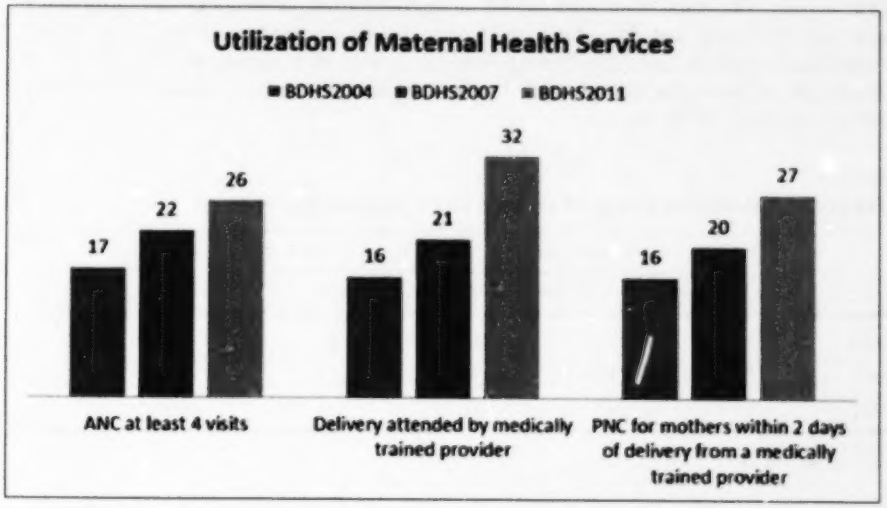
64. **Challenges**: Ensuring compliance of labour laws including equal wage and benefits by the private sector employers is a challenge. Small and micro enterprises are run by informal practices. The Government's capacity and resources are very limited to be able to monitor them all. Minimum wages in agriculture, the largest employing sector, could not be ascertained. Women concentrate mainly in the low end jobs due to their low educational attainment.

Health

65. The "Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Development Programme" (HPNSDP, 2011-16) in collaboration with development partners aims to accelerating progress of the health, population and nutrition (HPN) sector. The Heath Policy, 2011 aims at ensuring low cost primary and emergency care for all. The health sector outcome has shown positive trends due to a pluralistic health system with many stakeholders. The approach was to promote equity, deployment of female workers to bring high-priority services to doorsteps together with actions for women's empowerment, expanding education, and mitigation of the effect of natural disasters. Targeted programmes, on family planning, immunization, diarrhoea control, maternal and child health, tuberculosis, vitamin A supplementation contributed to reduced morbidity and mortality and increased life expectancy.

66. **Health care at grass-roots level**: More than 13,500 community clinics, each serving 6,000 people, were revitalized to reach provide primary health, nutrition and family planning services to the poor at the community level. About 3,500 Union Health and Family Welfare Centres and 407 Maternal Child Health-Family Planning units operate and during 2009-12, a total of 2,722 Upazilla Health Complexes were upgraded. In 2009-12, recruitment of 5,700 physicians enhanced doctor-patient ratio. Recruitment of additional health-care staff, establishment of 25 women friendly hospitals; 300 centres providing screening services for breast and cervical cancer for women; fistula screening in 10 medical colleges; 100 bedded specialized Diabetic, Endocrine and Metabolic Hospital and 150 bedded National Heart Foundation for women and children and 136 Health and Family Welfare Centres; e-health services; 482 mobile phone health services programme are other steps taken. In 2012, 0.455 million people received services and 0.76 million were referred to advance services. Primary health-care facilities including reproductive health-care services have been expanded for the low income urban communities. Maternal and tertiary health-care service facilities have been expanded in collaboration with private sector.

Figure 1
Utilization of Maternal Health Services



Source: Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2011.

67. **Maternal and child health**: Maternal mortality declined from 3.48 in 2008 to 1.94 by 2012 (per 1,000 live births). Deliveries by medically trained providers reaching from 16 per cent in 2004 to 32 per cent in 2011, and improved ante natal care (ANC) and postnatal care (PNC) of mothers, TT coverage of the females in their reproductive age has reduced mortality among women of reproductive age. Trained traditional birth attendants assist in 11 per cent of deliveries. Maternal Health Voucher Scheme has been introduced in 53 Sub-districts for ensuring treatment facilities for pregnant mothers. Emergency Anti-natal care is ensured to 2.79 million pregnant mothers through upazila health complexes and 97 Women and Children Welfare Centres. However, about 2 thirds of all births are still assisted by untrained personnel. The 28th May is observed as Safe Motherhood Day for awareness raising and the print and electronic media broadcast awareness raising programme on health, nutrition and family planning.

68. Bangladesh is among the 16 countries that are on track to achieve MDG 4 on child mortality (50 per 1,000 live births in 2009 from 146 in 1990). The infant mortality rate (below 1 year) is 43 (per thousand). Child mortality (below 5) rate has reduced from 65 to 41 (per thousand) and breast feeding increased from 42 per cent to 64 per cent for 6 month children. The rate of child vaccination (below 1) increased by 83 per cent through Expanded Programme on immunization (EPI) programme.

69. **Nutrition**: 22.5 million women are receiving nutritional services and Vitamin A supplement reached 95 per cent of 6-9 months old kids. Iron-deficiency and other nutritional anaemia are addressed through awareness raising the routine service-delivery network and National Nutrition Services (NNS). More than 50 per cent of women have chronic energy deficiency and improvement in women's nutritional status over the past 20 years has been slow. Women with a BMI<18.5 kg/m2 was 34 per cent in 2004, and 30 per cent in 2007 which reached to 24 per cent in 2011.

43 per cent women were anaemic in 2011. Obesity also is gradually becoming prominent among women (2 per cent in 2011) and 14 per cent women were overweight. The iron folic acid (IFA) supplementation during the last pregnancy was slowly rising but iron-deficiency anaemia is remaining in the same level. Nutritional anaemia is controlled by treating intestinal parasites during vitamin A campaign and separate De-worming Week. Programmes on food security and safety net also address nutrition.

Table 3
Trends in Nutritional Status of Women and Children Under 5

	Women in per cent		*Children (Under 5) in per cent*		
Year	*Height<145 cm*	*BMI<18.5*	*Stunted*	*Wasted*	*Underweight*
2004	16	34	51	15	43
2007	15	30	43	17	41
2011	13	24	41	16	36

Source: BDHS 2011.

70. **Contraceptive use**: Contraceptive use increased from 56 per cent in 2007 to 61 per cent in 2011 against a target of 72 per cent by 2016. Regional disparities exist in use of modern contraceptives and overall, 12 per cent of currently married women have an unmet need for family planning services, 4 per cent for spacing and 7 per cent for limiting births. A target of the HPNSDP is to reduce unmet need for family planning services to 9 per cent by 2016.

71. Water and sanitation: Increased access to safe water and sanitation services has helped in reducing health and nutritional problem of women and at the household level. The Government built 130,823 arsenic free water sources throughout the country. About 95 per cent people in rural areas, have access to at least one source of safe drinking water. Disregarding the arsenic contamination, around 97.8 per cent population of Bangladesh is using improved drinking water source, while arsenic adjusted figure is about 86 per cent. The National Sanitation Campaign to ensure 100 per cent sanitation in collaboration with NGOs and the local government institutions is under implementation. Implementation of a National Sanitation Strategy to achieve universal sanitation coverage has brought down the percentage of households having no toilets to 3 per cent in 2014 from 11.31 per cent in 2005. About 63.5 per cent of population is using improved sanitation.

72. **Challenges**: Reaching affordable lifecycle based health care to all citizens and in remote locations, lack of Geriatric care, persistent malnutrition, low use of some basic health services are challenges. Child pregnancy, another major challenge as about 50 per cent of all 15-19 years old females are married, of who about 33 per cent are already mothers, and another 6 per cent are pregnant. Everyday 21 women die giving birth, of whom 13 are below 18 years of age. Addressing these require community awareness and action. Making tertiary health-care facilities at the local level and to the poor women is another challenge. About 64 per cent of the health expenditure is borne by the households and the insurance sector does not have affordable health-care system. The limitation of resources is a main concern to cover health care for all.

Economic empowerment of women

73. **Poverty reduction**: Poverty reduction is the single most important agenda of the Government. Planned economic development and sustainable social safety net for the hard core poor, targeted poverty reduction programmes for women by MOWCA and other ministries, continued microfinance (most of the beneficiaries are women) programme by Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation (PKSF) and banks through NGOs are contributing towards poverty reduction. Taka 8.0 billion has been allocated in FY 2014-15 budget for micro-credit through PKSF. Since January 2010 a total of 8,07,039 youths were trained by the Department of Youth of whom 1,98,210 were self-employed and 87,820 trained youths were given loan. Of the beneficiaries, 35 per cent were women. The main 4 large micro-finance institutions (MFI) are — BRAC, ASA, TMSS and BURO Bangladesh, as well as Grameen Bank (GB) cover the large share of the credit and savings operations. Many other NGOs run poverty alleviation programmes and they mainly lend to women.

74. Interest free credit for employment for the hard-core rural and urban poor are in place. Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs) address basic needs of the people and the major SSNPs are: Food for Works (FFW), Vulnerable Group Development (VGD), Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF), 100 days employment, micro finance and old age allowance. Disadvantaged persons, particularly women, children and disabled are given priority under the SSNPs. Local Government institutions and DWA also implement SSNPs.

75. **Women entrepreneurship development**: The Industrial Policy 2010 aims to mainstream women in the industrialization process and includes a strategy to undertake special measures to develop women entrepreneurship ensuring access to land and finance for business support services. Entrepreneurial capacity development and access to finance are the two major focuses. Quota provisions have been introduced for women in allotment of plots in Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) industrial estates. Bangladesh Bank (BB) established refinancing schemes. About 40 Banks and non-banks Financial Institutions are partners in refinance facilities and lent to 8,358 women by June 2013. BB has encouraged all banks and financial institutions to finance women owned enterprises at 10 per cent interest rate and to allow collateral free loans up to Tk. 2.5 million. Banks have been instructed to reserve 15 per cent of total SME funds exclusively for women entrepreneurs. A dedicated Women Entrepreneurs Desk has been established in BB and all the banks and financial institutions have been directed to establish a Women entrepreneurship Unit at head office and at branch levels. In FY2013, a separate Women Development Fund was established to assist women entrepreneurs. In FY2014, an activity to train 16,000 women entrepreneurs has been undertaken. About 13,000 women entrepreneurs were developed and supported for agribusiness by Department of Agricultural Marketing.

76. ICT Division (ICTD), provides training to young women to become self-employed and entrepreneurs in the out-sourcing market and by providing ICT services. Several projects have trained about 9,000 women in 2013-2014. To implement the vision of Digital Bangladesh, E-service centres have been established in all districts, 147 upazillas and 4,516 Unions run by local youths of whom 50 per cent are women. Increased access to mobile phones in remote locations helps women to communicate with markets, transfer money and getting information. Websites and social media are also linking women with markets.

77. DWA established a sales centre named "*Joyeeta*" and its three branches support 18 thousand grass root level women entrepreneurs of 180 women associations to market their products. The SME Foundation supports women entrepreneurs through 71 help lines and by providing group loans. Women Entrepreneurs are trained by Small and Cottage Industries Training Institute (SCITI), SME Foundation, and MOWCA. BB in collaboration with Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry develops capacity of women entrepreneurs in meeting the paper requirement of banks and linking them with banks for finance. Shops were allocated for women in the Dhaka International Trade Fair. Women's market sections have been constructed in rural markets for women entrepreneurs and they are provided training on shop management, financial management and legal requirements in running businesses.

78. **Access to land and housing**: Several projects ensure women's access to land. A "One House One Farm Project" has reached 40,000 villages among 10,38,000 beneficiaries of whom about 6,92,000 are women. The Shelter Project in two phases, rehabilitated 1,80,130 families in the coastal areas have been rehabilitated. Nine thousand acres of government land has been allocated to 6,185 landless families through the development of strip of sandy land development and the habitation project. Families with no land are rehabilitated permanently with government land on the embankment of rivers. 142,073 families have rehabilitated with 69,591 acres of land. In these programmes, lease deeds are registered under the names of both spouses. In Dhaka city, 2016 flats have been built for low income families and slum-dwellers. 190 cluster-villages have been built to rehabilitate 8,222 families who are victims of disaster and natural calamities. Permanent land with built-in house including lease deed agreement was given to 1,845 women under Cluster Village Project.

Rural women

79. **Economic benefits**: The rural development strategy incorporates rural infrastructure development, promotion of self-employment and agricultural development as the focus areas. DWA has allocated micro-credit to 0.30 million beneficiaries through 3,525 women organizations During FY 2009 to 2014. Projects under Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, Rural Development Academy, Department of Cooperatives, Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Department of Livestock Services, Department of Fisheries generate employment and create opportunities for rural people. A major part of the agents and beneficiaries of these programmes are women. During 2010-2014 period more than 4,88,356 (50 per cent women) rural people participated in different types of training programmes under Ministry of Agriculture. In FY2014-2015, DAE will train 1,50,000 women. A total of 145 Agriculture Information and Communication Centres consist of 30-40 members, of whom almost 30 per cent are women. As per the report on Rural Wages in Asia, by Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Britain rural wages in Bangladesh rose to $2.21 a day in 2010 from $1.52 in 2005, marking a 45 per cent increase. Micro-finance programmes are mostly in rural areas and support women.

80. Some key rural development projects include the Rural Employment and Road Maintenance Programme-2 employing 46 thousand women for 4 years; the Integrated Rural Employment Support Project for the Poor Women employing 20 thousand women in 2015-2014; the Second Crop Diversification Project, which

supported 636,000 beneficiaries and half of them are women; the Second Participatory Livestock Development Project supported 589,043 beneficiaries (97 per cent women) with training and finance by June 2012 for livestock rearing.

81. **Infrastructure**: The water supply and sanitation programmes address the water and sanitation needs of rural women involving them in management. Rural infrastructure development projects ensure women's access to infrastructure as beneficiaries as users and in management. In 2013-2014, 93 UP Complexes, 32 Growth Centres and 32 Women Corners have been established. Improved rural roads and transportation has enabled rural women in enhancing their income by ensuring better connectivity with markets. Designs of union council complexes, flood shelters and markets consider the needs of women and ensure water supply and sanitation, private corners and sitting rooms for women. In the coastal areas women are involved in Disaster Management Committees and the Cyclone Shelter Management Committees. The water management cooperative associations (WMCA) include provision of one third membership for women. Similarly the Co-management Committees of forests include 40 per cent women.

82. **Energy**: In rural areas the major share of energy consumption is for cooking and about 51 per cent of the energy for cooking comes from bio-mass. Improved Cook Stoves (ICS) is saving fuel and reducing emission, women's drudgery and health hazards. Within the climate change context, ICS is expanding with more involvement of women. More than 30 organizations engaged in the rural renewable energy, introduce ICS for pollution control and saving energy. Use of ICS reached to 750,836 in 2013 from 45,667 in 2009 only by Grameen Shakti (GS), and the other are operating at a small scale. GS trained more than 1,000 local youth especially women to make, sell and repair ICSs. NGOs have introduced solar home system (SHS) for productivity, income, connectivity and education for women.

83. **Health and education**: Community Clinics provide health services to rural women. Integrated measures for food and nutrition security, and Micronutrient Supplementation and National Nutrition Programmes through satellite community nutrition centres support rural women. Primary school network covers almost all villages to ensure access to education for all children. Non-formal and continuing education programmes ensure skills and literacy for rural women.

84. **Awareness raising**: International Rural Women Day on 15 October is observed. Awareness raising programmes in rural areas aim to create a positive attitude towards women and reducing harmful practices like, child marriage, dowry, domestic violence. Women have been trained as members of Disaster Management Committees and as among community level volunteers on early warning, evacuation, rescue and first aid, water and sanitation.

85. **Challenges**: With the limited resources of the government, it is difficult to provide all required support for rural women. Extreme weather events due to climate change often deplete the resources and infrastructure creating additional pressure on the limited resources.

Disadvantaged groups of women

86. The Government has undertaken different programmes for the advancement and addressing the needs of different groups of vulnerable women.

87. **Social safety net**: The social safety net programmes (SSNP) target the poor particularly women for social protection, social empowerment, food security, and microfinance programmes. The Vulnerable Group Development Programme, supporting 750,000 in FY2014-15 women with monthly allowance and training. Other programmes include i. Poor, Widow and Distressed Women Allowance covering 1.01 million poor women, ii. Distressed Women and Children Fund, iii. Maternity Allowance for the poor benefiting 0.10 million women in FY2014-15, iv. Lactating Working Mothers Allowance, for 0.22 million women in FY2014-15, v. Rural Mother Centre for micro credit support, vi. Oppressed Women Welfare Fund, vii. Food and Livelihood Security Program providing allowance to 50,000 women, and viii. Old Age Allowance to support 2.72 million elderly women. Other programmes include Vulnerable Group Feeding, fund for acid victims, school stipend programmes, test relief, open market sales (OMS), which also benefit women. A National Social Security Strategy has been developed to strengthen the existing safety net programmes with a universal life-cycle-based coverage with international standard.

88. **Disaster vulnerability**: The Disaster Management Act, 2012 enables the Government to make regulation to disaster risk reduction and rehabilitation of the women and children affected by the disaster. In Cyclone Shelter Construction, Maintenance and Management Guidelines, 2011 has provision to have a separate room reserved for the females. The Comprehensive Disaster Management Plan (CDMP) provides for training of volunteers and involves women. About 8,000 women have been trained as volunteers. In newly targeted 6 upazilas out of 9,435 volunteers 50 per cent are women. Women received Disaster Management Training at village end union levels and 261,032 women were oriented through the household level courtyard sessions in 2010-14. Special projects support relief and livelihood restoration, Test Relief and Food For Work programmes support women. The banks and MFIs provide financial services to the vulnerable people and women.

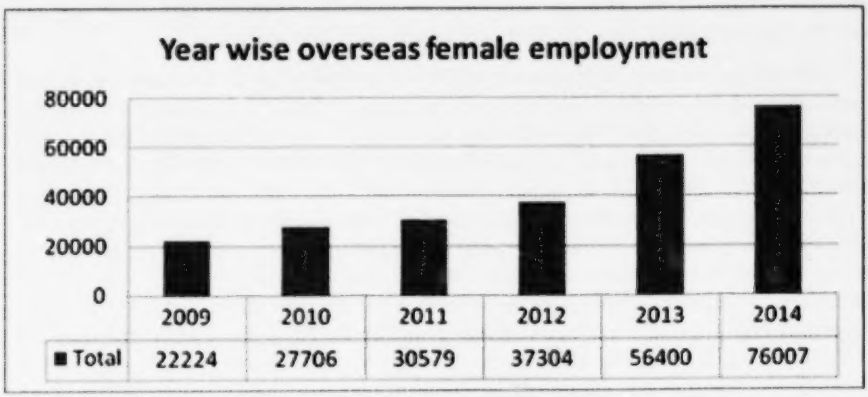
89. **Physically challenged persons**: In Bangladesh, about 10 per cent of the population is physically challenged and it is 8.77 per cent among women. Women with disability face complex discriminatory situation as women and as disabled. SSNPs provide allowances for the financially insolvent persons, stipends for student, and grants for schools for persons with disability (PWD). An Autistic Academy has been established and a multi-purpose sports complex has been constructed for PWDs. Disabled Service and Assistance Centre in 34 districts support PWDs, around 20,000 physically and mentally challenged persons received medical treatment annually from mobile "One stop physiotherapy Units". Special needs have been incorporated as one of the agenda in the inclusive education framework. A National Disability Complex, a women's hostel for new women employees with disabilities, 25 services and assistance centres for the women with disability (WWD) have been established. In FY2014-15 Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled covers hundred thousand disabled persons. A quota provision of 1 per cent in Class I and Class II officers' job and 10 per cent quota in Class III and IV staff category is maintained for PWDs. The Protibondhi Sheba O Sahajya Kendra through 73 centres provide physiotherapy, hearing test, visual test, counselling, referral service etc. and assistive devices also given free of cost . Since 2010 about 20 million PWDs received these services. Training for the mothers of mentally challenged children, teachers' training programme on Bangla sign language, guardians' training on autism, behaviour modification, picture exchange

communication system (PECS) and developmental disorder management etc. are given. Children with autism gets 2 per cent reserved seats in academic institutions. Additional time is allowed to autistic children in public examinations. A survey has been initiated to gather accurate data on persons with disabilities.

90. **Ethnic minorities**: Bangladesh ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). Bangladesh is largely ethnically homogeneous. The bordering districts of the North and North Eastern region have several groups of indigenous people. The Small Ethnic Groups Cultural Institutions Act, 2010 aims to preserve and promote the cultural heritage, language, religious practices and traditional lifestyle of all ethnic communities. A five per cent quota is maintained for ethnic minority candidates for recruitment in the public sector. Again, 3 to 5 seats are reserved for ethnic minority students in higher educational institutions. Measures to provide primary education in mother tongues of various ethnic groups has been initiated. In the FY2014-15, 13,000 families are covered by the Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) Food Assistance Programme. CHT Development Facility has supported community empowerment across CHT through 1,686 Para Nari Development Groups (Women's Groups), and micro-grants for community projects. A network of 1,000 Community Health Service Workers, backed by 16 Mobile Health Teams with 80 Satellite Clinics work in remote areas. The media, lawyers and civil society groups are working together in CHT to address conflict and violence. A Peace Makers' Network has been formed with 47 members (13 women) who have been trained on conflict mediation and peace building. For children 10 hostels were built in CHT area. One Stop Crisis Cells have been established in the three hill districts in order to give information and referral services to victims of violence. Microcredit support of NGOs support ethnic women. In the Northern region women from Santal community have been trained on modern vegetable cultivation techniques and women entrepreneurs of CHT have been introduced to bank financing.

91. **Migrant women**: The Overseas Employment Act, 2013 has been enacted and women's migration is gradually increasing. The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment (MOEWOE) through the Probashi Kalyan Bank provides interest free loans to women migrating to meet their initial expenses and to set up businesses upon return. The Ministry addresses issues of women workers' safety and rights, promoting bilateral cooperation through memorandum of Understandings (MoU) and initiatives such as inter-governmental seminars. Women are given language and skills training before departure. The recruitment agents sending women workers are closely monitored and mass communication and public awareness raising activities are used for awareness about the rules and requirements of migration.

Figure 2
Year-wise Overseas Female Employment



Source: http://www.bmet.org.bd/BMET/stattisticalDataAction (2/10/2014).

92. Services for returning migrant women workers include reintegration and referral service. MOEWOE has set up a support group for returning women workers and hotlines in some countries. Setting up resource centres for workers in Oman and United Arab Emirates to respond to the needs of migrant women workers is under way. Annual training of labour attachés includes necessary information about women workers, their specific issues, response system when VAW is reported.

93. **Addressing spatial disparities**: Spatial disparities are also considered for development. Livelihood development programmes support women in small riverine islands, the draught and flood prone areas of the Northern region, and the coastal regions. Water, sanitation and infrastructure support is based on poverty mapping. Beneficiary coverage for VGD, FFW and primary education stipend are defined based on identified poverty prone areas.

94. **Other groups**: The Government has recently recognized transgender people as a third gender and they are provided with limited support. HIV/AIDS affected women are given free treatment. Rohingya refugees from Myanmar are living in Cox's Bazar near the border in the Southeast. There are about 28,000 registered refugees living in two UN refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar as well as some 200,000 "unregistered people of concern" living outside of the camps. Women of the camps are provided limited support in collaboration with UN Agencies. Children of sweeper community and street children, children of sex workers and working girl children are supported under special projects.

95. **Challenges**: The access to education, health and productive employment of disabled women is limited as women and they are subjected to social stigma and gender-based violence. The education and health system is inadequate to address the needs of all types of PWDs. Support services could not be reached to the indigenous people living in remote hilly region. Training facilities and curricula are inadequate in equipping women of vulnerable groups. There is a need for gender-sensitive, rights-focused pre-departure orientations specifically designed for female migrant workers. Consular services to meet the specific needs of female migrant workers are

limited. HIV/AIDs at times remain hidden and women who are HIV/AIDS positive face social stigma.

Marriage and Family Relations

96. The civil society groups are advocating for adopting a uniform family code. The personal laws are governed by religious provisions. It will take some more time to make the society agree on a uniform civil code. In 2011, the High Court issued a directive (through amendment of the Muslim Marriages and Divorces Registration Act, 1974) to ensure verification of birth certificate and/or national ID card during marriage registration so as to prevent child marriage. In 2014, the Government initiated the approval process of the Child Marriage Restraint Act with the provision to punish persons who are liable of putting a minor in a marriage contract. Social mobilization programmes in collaboration with NGOs using media aim prevent child marriage. A campaign called "Girls not Brides" is being implemented in collaboration with NGOs. In 2012, the Cabinet approved Hindu Marriage Registration Act-2012 a bill for marriage registration and divorce for the Hindu Community which allows registration but makes registration optional.

97. **Challenges**: Adoption of a uniform civil code is difficult as the leaders of all religion should agree. The social situation is not yet mature for that. To change the deep rooted gender norms and attitudes among individuals and in society, well-coordinated bottom-up and top-down approaches are necessary involving the entire society, Sensitization of various groups in a culturally sensitive manner is difficult and time consuming. Child marriage takes place with the consent of the parents and often not reported. Approaches to change social norms are not sufficient yet.

Millennium Development Goals

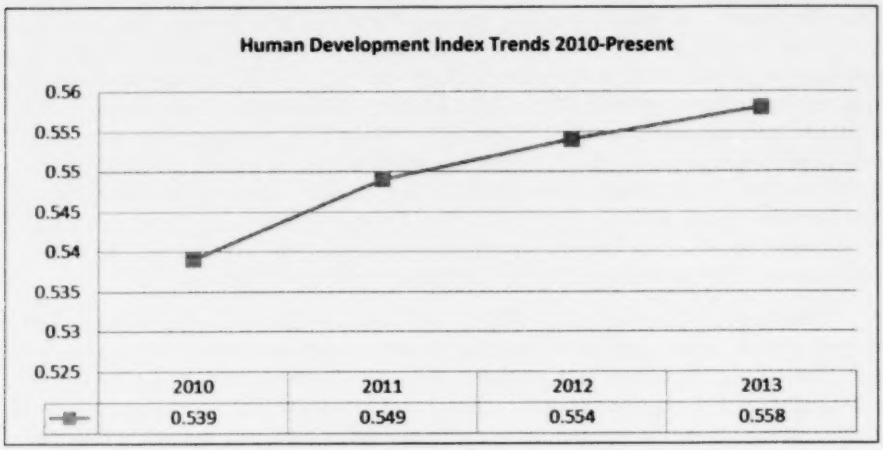
98. Bangladesh adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the globally agreed targets. Implementation of MDG targets was incorporated within the national development plan and rigorous monitoring was ensured. The SFYP, 2011-2015 within follows the framework of the Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021 and MDG. The SFYP was consistent with the convention and the MDG targets on gender equality, poverty reduction, and human development were addressed.

99. Annual reduction of poverty during the 2000 to 2010 period was 1.74 per cent. In 2013 the Planning Commission estimated figure of people living in poverty to be 26.2 per cent and less than 25 per cent in 2014. As per 2011 estimate 6 per cent population were living under $1.25 a day. Bangladesh has already met one of the indicators of target 1 by bringing down the poverty gap ratio to 6.5 against 2015 target of 8.0. The estimated figures suggest that the MDG target of halving the population living below the poverty line (from 56.7 per cent to 29.0 per cent) has already been achieved by 2012. The Lack of sex disaggregated data makes it difficult to measure reduction of women's poverty. However, the majority of the safety net programs were targeted towards women. Still the rate of poverty reduction was lower than expected due to natural disasters, climate change, illness, food price rise and economic crises.

100. As discussed earlier, progress has been made in equitable access in education, reduction of dropouts, completion of the cycle, and quality enhancement in primary and secondary education. Gender parity in primary and secondary enrolment has been achieved, and health indicators have improved. The Human Development

Index (HDI) showed a slow but upward trend as a result of a pluralistic and inclusive approach in education and health. Bangladesh fell within medium human development country with a score of 0.558 as per the report of 2014, slightly lower than the value for South Asia and ranked 142 globally. Figure 7 shows the progress.

Figure 3
Human Development Index Trends 2010-2013



Data Source: Human Development Report by UNDP.
Source: http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/BGD.

101. Excepting MDG 3, the other targets were not always monitored in sex disaggregated manner. Although other MDGs were relevant for gender equality, MDG reporting did not include gender perspective for other targets such as environment or diseases. Some MDGs had little or no relevance for other areas of CEDAW like stereotyping, VAW, discriminatory laws, reservation etc. Collection and presentation of sex disaggregated data has increased over time but sex disaggregated data are not available for all indicators. Substantial progress has been made on Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. Interventions on girls' education have been discussed in the earlier part of the report. Under the Education Assistance Trust Act, 2012 the Government established Education Trust Fund. From the interest of the fund, the Government would distribute Taka 75.15 crore among 1.33 lakh female students. There has also been steady improvement in the social and political empowerment of women. Women in wage employment are still low. Only one woman out of every five is engaged in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector.

102. The Global Gender Gap Index, introduced by the World Economic Forum shows reduction of gaps and gradual improvement. In 2014 report, Bangladesh ranked 68 out of 142 counties with a score of 0.6973 (out of 1.0). The score was 0.940 in educational attainments and 0.966 in health and survival. Economic participation for women in Bangladesh is still very low (score 0.477) compared to countries in the same income group. However, Bangladesh ranks 10th in political empowerment with a score only of 0.406.

103. Bangladesh faces the challenges of climate change, global emission and environmental pollution. Women face difficulties in accessing fresh water, due to

salinity, levels of arsenic and human made pollution. Women being the majority among the poor are affected adversely by disasters and as household managers they bear additional burden to maintain livelihoods and human development. The National Climate Change Action Plan incorporates a multi-pronged approach where women are integrated, which has resulted in higher resilience and declining disaster losses. Women have demonstrated considerable strength in the face of adversity and played critical roles in both adaptation and mitigation of climate change.

Dissemination

104. The Government shared the concluding observations with all ministries, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on MOWCA and the CSOs. Consultations and meetings were arranged to share the steps that have been taken to ensure the de jure and de facto equality of women, as well as the progress made in women's advancement. The progress of the implementation of the BPFA and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly were shared at a National consultation in May 2014. The compliance to the observations was also shared with the stakeholders in government and CSOs.

Ratification of other treaties

105. The Government has ratified International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families in 2011.

Follow-up to concluding observations

106. The Concluding Observations were made in 2011 and the progress report was due in 2013. The Government took necessary actions as has been elaborated in the relevant sections of this report. The 20 year review process of the implementation of the BPFA was initiated and the Survey on violence against women was under way. Therefore, the Government decided to prepare and submit a comprehensive report encompassing detailed information from all quarters and submit as the main report.

2. *Additional Legal and Other Appropriate Steps and Measures Undertaken*

107. This subsection of the Report provides information on additional legal and other appropriate steps and measures undertaken towards the implementation of the Convention. The information below is structured so as to follow the main clusters (Parts I-IV) of the Convention, and deals with Articles 1 to 16.

A. Part I

Article 1: Definition of Discrimination

108. Definition of discrimination as per Convention is contained in the Constitution of Bangladesh. All Government documents such as policies, strategies, action plans, acts and rules etc. are in line with such definition.

Article 2: Obligations to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women

109. As mentioned earlier, the Constitution ensures equality and equal protection of law for all citizens and allows no discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Women have equal rights with men in all spheres of the State and of public life. The Constitution also provides for the scope

for making special provision in favour of women or disadvantaged groups. Therefore, as citizen women enjoy the fundamental rights as per the Constitution. The WDP 2011, NAP 2013, SFYP provide for eliminating discrimination against women in all sphere of women's lives and as per CEDAW, BPFA and MDGs. The GRB and Gender Planning Guidelines allow reducing gender discrimination.

110. The Government has not yet considered the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as a legal binding, almost all laws are in conformity with the provisions of the Convention. Discriminatory provisions in some laws such as, the Citizenship Act have been reviewed and revised and new laws are in line with CEDAW. The RPO and the legislation of the last few decades are in consistency with the various conventions and international agreements ratified. The rules and guidelines of the High court regarding the practice of Shalish and Fatwa, also uphold the spirit of CEDAW. The laws provide protection against VAW and discrimination.

Reservation

111. Discussed in Section I

Article 3: Development and Advancement of Women

112. Women have the same rights for access and participation as men in political process; social protection and services; human development including health, education and skills; participation in development programmes; employment and economic participation; ownership of property and assets, and legal protections (See Article 2 above). Special measures have been taken to increase women's access and benefits from services (See Article 4) as women cannot enjoy the human rights and fundamental freedoms as guaranteed by the constitution on the basis of equality with men. Often women's unequal status in the personal sphere extends to the public sphere and is the basis of their unequal participation in the public sphere. Remedial measures have helped in improving women's situation in all spheres as discussed before and additional measures taken are described under the relevant Articles.

113. With regard to the monitoring of the implementation of the various policies, programmes and laws, the NCWCD and other Committees and WID focal Points are operating. The MOWCA coordinates an institutional mechanism for the advancement of women and WID Focal Points function as a means of inter-ministerial coordination on ensuring mainstreaming of women's concerns into all sectoral projects, programmes and policies. An Inter-ministerial Coordination and Evaluation Committee headed by the Minister in charge of MOWCA monitor the progress of implementation of sectoral plans and programmes (Annex-E Figure-5). The mechanism is not very effective as NCWCD could not meet regularly to provide necessary guidance. The technical capacity of MOWCA and other ministries is weak to effectively coordinate women's development. The resource and capacity of MOWCA to effectively provide technical support to other ministries are limited. MOWCA also does not have authority and expertise to coordinate or supervise actions of other ministries.

Article 4: Temporary Special Measures

114. The Constitution allows making special provisions for women. Most of the Ministries have taken temporary special measures aimed at accelerating equality

between men and women. Policies and measures that incorporate temporary special measures are mentioned below.

115. **Policy**: As mentioned earlier, the key policies and plans (SFYP, WDP, NAP) aim to accelerate attainment of equality between women and men. The process of developing the Seventh Five Year Plan has considered gender equality as a key strategy and has developed a separate background paper as the basis to assess and identify the gender equality issues and ways to address them during the upcoming plan period. Policies and acts have addressed gender needs and incorporated measures for women's participation and advancement. Some acts and policies formulated immediately before the reporting period incorporated specific provisions for participation and protection of women's rights were in effect, such as the laws governing the local government institutions.

116. **Political representation**: Women's participation in politics has been ensured through the special provision of the Constitution for reserved seats in addition to the regular seats of the Parliament, which is valid up to 2019. Such provisions are in effect for local government bodies. The impact of these measures is yet to be felt in terms of increased representation of women in the general seats. The RPO suggests measures on women's representation in political parties and in national elections.

117. **Special programmes**: There are many women targeted projects/programmes in each sector: health, social protection, education, agriculture, rural development, finance etc. Some of these have been discussed against the compliance of the Concluding Observation or under specific Articles. The impacts of these temporary special measures are evident in all sectors. A total of 37,75,898 girls received stipend and tuition subsidies in 2013-14. The maternal health voucher scheme aims at reduction in maternal and infant mortality. Participation in community activities and in politics is evident as a result of special measures. Specific projects have been undertaken for the education of street children, children of sex workers and other vulnerable workers. Social protection projects take measures recognizing the special vulnerability of women to poverty and incorporated employment opportunity, ration, skills development or cash allowance. Special quota in bank finance has supported women entrepreneurs.

118. **Employment**: The quota system in place for recruitment to public sector (10 per cent for officers and 15 per cent for staff). In primary schools 60 per cent of all new teacher recruits are women. Quota provision has also been incorporated in recruitment in secondary education, defence services and judiciary.

Article 5: Address Sex Roles and Stereotyping

119. The Social and cultural norms influence legal and policy provisions. Women's equality, maternity as a social function and the need for sharing the household and child care are not yet widely recognized. Steps taken in this regards are as follows:

120. **Maternity leave and day-care**: Maternity leave has been increased to six months for public sector and is allowed for two times in the working life of a woman. The private sector is also directed to follow the practice but all agencies have not yet ensured. Labour laws provide for maternity leave and also for child care facilities where more than fifty women are employed. Day-care centres for working women are inadequate. Some centres support women garment workers in

collaboration with the employers. In reality very few women enjoy all benefits as private sector organizations are reluctant to ensure these measures.

121. Girls are encouraged to study agriculture, science or in technical fields. Revision of text books by the NCTB is an ongoing process. Teachers training on inclusive education include gender equality as a major subject. Some families are strict about the practice of seclusion ('purdah') although changing because of many practical reasons. The incidence of poverty, climate change, rising economic aspirations and increasing urbanization are some phenomena contributing to the breaking of traditional values and changing social structures, forcing women to come out of seclusion. This has helped reduce the prejudices against women's working outside the home. Social expectations of the roles to be played by women are changing and women are participating in politics and outdoor work. Women are encouraged to join non-traditional work. Women have joined in civil service, judiciary, defence services, airline pilots, media, hospitality industry, vehicle drivers, doctors, engineers, police officials, and technicians, providing significant change in sex roles and stereotyping.

122. Though some men are gradually taking some responsibility of care work, the value of care work is yet to be recognized and shared by men. Therefore, women become overburdened playing their roles in both public and private life.

Article 6: Trafficking in Women and Prostitution of Women

123. Bangladesh is a source country and in some cases used as a transit of human trafficking. The extent of trafficking is unknown as often trafficking happens within the stream of labour migration and women fall prey to exploitation and victims of trafficking and prostitution. The measures to prevent trafficking include strengthening of border posts, legislation, stronger monitoring and enforcement of laws. The PSHTA, the Action Plan, the draft rules and the SOP have been discussed before.

124. Rescue and recovery of victims in the country and from abroad are supported in collaboration with International Organization for Migration (IOM) and NGOs. The support is limited compared to needs. Regional and inter-agency cooperation to coordinate legal and administrative measures and procedures is still not enough. Lawyers, judges and media personnel were oriented on the PSHT Act. The Act has been incorporated in the regular training programs of Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) and Forensic Training Institute (FTI). Local government, border guards, public prosecutors, immigration officials, border security officials, and law enforcing agencies have been trained on combating human trafficking. However, the coverage of training is not adequate to reach all stakeholders.

125. Inter-ministerial monitoring mechanism at MoHA with NGO representation is in place. The Police Headquarters monitors incidents of trafficking at district and upazilla levels and maintains a comprehensive database. BGB and Police are involved in rescue and recovery of survivors of trafficking and apprehension of traffickers. Designated prosecution officials at the national and district levels are in place. The Overseas Employment Act, 2013 promotes safe migration and prevents human trafficking. Labour recruiters need to meet more stringent criteria to become licensed and job seekers to register in an online database. A mandatory 21-day pre-departure training is given to women going abroad to work as domestic servants.

Prostitution

126. In many cases trafficking is for prostitution or leads to prostitution. Statistics related to prostitution is not available as they are either identified as destitute or as socially disabled. The Constitution states that "the State shall adopt effective measures to prevent prostitution and gambling". However there is no law against a person of 18 or above engaging in sexual activity in exchange for money. It is sufficient for a prostitute to have an affidavit delivered by a magistrate stating that she is above 18 for her not to be arrested by the Police. That does not preclude harassment. Prostitutes are often subjected to harassment and violence from the Police who are theoretically supposed to protect their rights. Prostitution is therefore, technically neither legal nor illegal but exists in a gap in the law. Therefore, prostitutes do not have any legal protection, nor can the State take any legal measures against them. As citizens they can demand the same fundamental rights from the State, but often denied in practice.

127. There is need for greater public awareness about forced prostitution, and the human rights of a prostitute as equal to any citizen. Unless they are treated as full human being with the same rights and privileges as others, it will not be possible to give any protection or ensure fulfilment of their rights.

B. Part II

Article 7: Eliminate Discrimination in the Political and Public Life

128. Women's right to participation in politics and public life is incorporated in the constitution. Women have equal right to vote and being elected in Parliament and in other elected bodies. Bangladesh has significant increase in participation of women Parliamentary and other elections as voters.

129. **Constitutional, legal and policy provisions**: Women's participation in the National Parliament and local government institutions has been ensured by reserving quota, in addition to their eligibility for the regular seats. The RPO, 2013 promotes participation in elections and in all committee positions of the political parties. The WDP and the SFYP have also set out strategies to ensure political empowerment of women.

130. **Current scenario**: Women represent 20 per cent members in the Parliament including 20 general seats. In the local government institutions, in addition to the reserved seats, some women have won elections for general seats. In the Upazila elections in 2014, in 458 Upazilas 1,509 women candidates participated which amounted to 3.4 candidates per upazila. Women were elected in all upazilas as Vice chairpersons. The two biggest political parties are led by women. Still women's participation in general is low in the political leadership and the parties often do not nominate women in general seats.

131. **Public service**: There is steady progress in the numbers of women in service at Class I from 18 per cent in 2010 and 21 per cent in 2013. Bangladesh has more than 1.1 million civil servants in 37 ministries, 11 divisions, 254 departments and 173 statutory bodies (BBS 2012). Service quota on the basis of both merit and reservations for districts, freedom fighters, women, and ethnic minorities is applied. Women are visible on boards of private corporations, in senior management, in diplomatic missions and in armed forces. There are more women in the departments and directorates engaged in service delivery, such as teachers, health and family

planning assistants, nurses, etc. There are 23 per cent of women in the judiciary. The number of women is decision-making positions in the private sector has also started to increase but data is limited. A number of associations of women entrepreneurs are operating. Though women's participation in the public service is increasing, however less than one fourth of the senior officials and managers are women.

132. Women's participation in NGOs, media, banks and private sector is increasing. Some of the prominent NGOs are headed by women. Organizations registered by DWA are mostly headed by women. Women form about 17 per cent of the members of cooperative societies.

Article 8: Equal Opportunity for International Representation

133. Women's representation at international level is increasing. From MOWCA, and other ministries, women senior officials have participated in international forums. Currently eight women are heading Bangladesh Missions abroad and 2 of them are Ambassadors. Two women are Counsellors at the Bangladesh Permanent Mission at UN Head Quarter. Three women have represented Bangladesh on CEDAW Committee, one being a current member. Women entrepreneurs are representing in business delegations. A child from Bangladesh has become one of the members of the Governing Body of SAIEVAC in 2012.

134. Bangladesh is the top contributor of women Police Officers to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations as Formed Police Unit (FPU), and has become the crucial partner in the transition from war to peace. 710 Women Police Officers have already completed UN peacekeeping missions and presently, 168 women police officers from Bangladesh are working in different missions. Bangladesh women Police Officers are working in 4 Four Peacekeeping Operations in Sudan, South Sudan, Haiti and Congo. Women in armed forces are also in peace keeping missions.

135. Women represent in different sports and game tournaments like SAAF Games, Asian games and tournaments those on hockey, cricket and football. Women also represent in cultural troops abroad. Some female singers, poets, writers and artists have gained international recognition.

Article 9: Equal Rights to Acquire, Change or Retain Nationality

136. As mentioned before, Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2009 amended section 5 of the Citizenship Law of 1951 to give a Bangladeshi woman the right to transmit her citizenship to her children.

C. Part III

Article 10: Equal Rights in the Field of Education

137. As explained earlier that NEP 2011 ensures compulsory and free primary education for all. Free education of girls' up to secondary level in public institutions and expansion of stipends have reduced dropout rates. One teacher of each school was trained in 2012 for pre-school and a total of 841,892 boys and 838,212 girls were enrolled. Same curriculum is used for both boys and girls at all levels. Private sector together with the Governments offer education at all levels. The share of gender in budget allocation for education has gradually increased over time. The PEDP III (2011-2016), a five-year program promotes inclusive education. More than 2.52 million students (54 per cent girls) sat for the 2013 final examination. The

proportion of eligible students taking the exam was 95 per cent and 96 per cent for girls. There has been a sharp increase in enrolment of physically impaired children.

138. Percentage of girl students appearing Secondary School Certificate in 2014 was 50.7 per cent. Transition rate from primary to secondary, secondary school to college has increased (Annex-E). Enrolment and completion rate of girls at the tertiary level in both public and private universities and different streams show improvements. Adult literate since 2008 is very low and falls short of the required rate for achieving the MDG target of 100 per cent by 2015. However, the gender parity index for adult literacy has increased from 0.60 in 1991 to 0.71 in 2000 and further to 0.88 in 2011.

139. **Technical education**: Six poly technique institutions provide technical education to girls. The technical universities of public and private sectors provide general and technical education. Women's participation in technical streams such as, agriculture, engineering and medical is increasing but still is low for women excepting for medical. Introduction of stipend program for girls at the university levels in science, and technical and vocational education is under consideration. Skills for employment programmes have identified some areas of skills for women based on market needs.

140. **Sports**: Sports activities among young women are supported. In Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishtan (BKSP) since 2010 about 400 girls have been participating in different events of games and sports. Both in-door and out-door games like Archery, Athletics, Cricket, Gymnastics, Judo, Tennis, Shooting & Swimming are being organized regularly. Seminars on health care, sanitation, personal safety, awareness programme, computer programme etc. are arranged. Women are enrolled in Bachelor of physical education training from the 6 physical education colleges. About 48,000 girls/women participate in yearly sports programmes. Women have represented internationally in different tournaments. Sports Complexes have been constructed in Gopalganj and Rajshahi. School and college ground and 6 physical education college infrastructure facilities are used by the rural girls. National tournaments are arranged for women by National Sports Council as follows:

Table 4
Women in Sports

Year	*Tournaments held*	*Training organized*	*Women participated*
2010	122	148	1 750
2011	168	191	2 000
2012	121	303	2 270
2013	98	173	3 500
2014-August	76	90	35 730

Source: Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Article 11: Equal Employment and Training Opportunities

141. The Constitution declares work as a right for every citizen and provides for equal opportunity and non-discrimination of all citizens in respect of employment or office in the service of the Republic and the State can make special provision in

favour of any backward section of citizens. The SFYP aimed to create jobs in the nonfarm sector and to rebalance the composition of employment from agriculture to more productive sectors. The public sector is the largest provider of formal employment. Women are employed as primary and secondary teachers, doctors and health workers, as administrators, civil servants and staff of sector corporations.

Table 5
Level-wise Number of Male and Female Officers and Employees in Govt. in 2010-2013

	Year 2010		*Year 2011*		*Year 2012*		*Year 2013*	
Class	*Male (%)*	*Female (%)*	*Male (%)*	*Female (%)*	*Male (%)*	*Female (%)*	*Male (%)*	*Female (%)*
Class I	81.86	18.14	81.65	18.35	81.19	18.81	79.68	20.32
Class II	85.88	14.12	86.06	13.94	86.37	13.63	85.95	14.05
Class III	91.50	8.50	91.02	8.98	91.11	8.89	90.73	9.27
Class IV	91.41	8.59	91.28	8.72	90.97	9.03	90.05	9.95
All	90.19	9.81	89.86	10.14	89.87	10.13	89.02	10.98

Source: Compiled from Ministry of Public Administration.

142. The above Table presents the number of staff at different levels in the Government, which show gradual increase however, still the total is only 10.98 per cent. Particularly the proportion of women in lower levels is not even near the minimum quota provisions though these positions often do not require special or higher education.

143. The Bangladesh Labour Act, 2013 provides for equal pay for equal work, women friendly working environment, maternity leave, and redress against harassment at the workplace. Generally employment opportunities are unequal for women due to their lack of required educational qualification, technical skills and social norms relating to women's roles. As per the Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2010 women's labour force participation (LFP) increased from 29.2 per cent in 2005/6 to 36 per cent in 2010. In 2013 the increase in total domestic employment as estimated by the Planning Commission, rose to 56.5 million from 51.9 million in the base year 2010. Women's LFP has been increasing at a faster rate compared to that of men but women are mostly in low end jobs. The readymade garment sector is the largest sector employing around 4.2 million women, though mainly as frontline unskilled workers. Women's participation in other export oriented industries is on the rise but women's engagement in non-farm sector has not increased as expected. The increase in male internal and external migration, men shifting to non-agricultural activities, and higher crop intensity have resulted in increased women's participation in the agriculture sector and as unpaid family labourer (56.3 per cent). Men dominate all types of industry except in private households where 81 per cent are women. One key concern is the higher growth rate of women as unpaid family workers and in informal sector posing challenge in attaining target for women's employment in non-farm sector.

144. Vocational Training and Education (VTE), and apprenticeships are given importance. A National Skills Development Council (NSDC) was established to

strengthen the links between training and the job opportunities. Three new projects have been initiated to promote skills for employment.

145. The Government supports entrepreneurial capacity development and access to finance. Trainings are provided by Government and private sector agencies like MIDAS and the Chambers of Commerce and Industry. In 2013-14 about 23,000 women were trained by BSCIC Design Centre.

146. In 2013, women's participation as migrants rose to 13.8 per cent and they mainly work as housemaids, cleaners, care givers etc. Only 3 per cent of the migrants are in professional categories and women are fewer. The Overseas Employment Policy waiting for submission and approval, which has a dedicated chapter on women migrant workers and on migrant workers families. MoUs for recruiting domestic female helpers (housekeepers) from Bangladesh to Hong Kong, Jordan and Saudi Arabia have been signed.

147. Self-employment opportunities for women have been created in agriculture, fisheries, livestock, and handicraft and cottage industries by providing training, finance and marketing. Trainings include technology such as, computers, telecommunications, printing etc. A good number of women are now engaged in ICT outsourcing market. The NGO programmes in Bangladesh have gained international reputation for creating employment opportunities for women. Self-employment generation is one of the major activities of most of the NGOs.

148. In the public sector employment, women and men receive equal benefits and pay at each level and their performance is assessed using same criteria and standard. Retirement benefits and medical support are also same for both women and men. Women are allowed six month paid maternity leave and the existing quota for recruitment is applied. In the private sector, gender differences exist in terms of wage rates. Women get on average two thirds of what men get. The Government, therefore, emphasizes on enforcement of labour laws and to motivate employers in paying equal pay and benefits to women.

Article 12: Equality in Access to Health Care and Family Planning

149. The services under the HPNSDP include mother and child health and reproductive health among others. Integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI), reproductive health care, limited curative care, preventive health care and treatment of local ailments are given from community clinics and Upazila Health Complexes (UHCs). Nutritional deficiency is being addressed through special programmes for children and expectant women. Elderly women get health-care services from existing service centres but access to affordable tertiary health-care facilities could not be ensured for all. Some specific health-care opportunities are available at the local level for PWDs. Health Education sessions on issues concerning women and girl children health are being organized at all levels of health facilities and by using mass-media.

150. The proportion of women marrying before age 18 decreased slightly but child marriage and adolescent motherhood rates are very high posing serious of high maternal mortality and the risk of the child being significantly undernourished and sick. Contraceptive prevalence rate has increased but unmet demand exists and door to door services could not be ensured.

151. As of 2014, a total of 3,241 persons were registered as HIV/AIDS infected though estimated number was 9,500 of whom 3,300 were women aged 15+. Women face social stigma. A total of twenty health-care facilities for HIV testing and counselling and providing free ARV are being established. Prevention services are given to all types of sex workers. About 35,400 female sex workers are covered by Global Fund for health and educational services. HIV positive pregnant women are treated in 3 tertiary level government hospitals. Also Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) and treatment support is given to them.

152. **Challenges**: Preference to male child, Ignorance, child marriage, child pregnancy is threats to women's reproductive health. The widespread stigma and discrimination against patients with HIV/AIDs and the sex workers hinder their access to services.

Article 13: Equal Rights to Economic and Social Benefits and Family Benefits

153. Women and men in the public service receive same family benefits, pensions and medical allowances. Women have equal right to housing, even if the husband is receiving a housing allowance. If both spouses are working, both can apply for allotment of residential plots. In case the husband has received housing allotment, the wife still receives her housing allowance. Women are given 3 year seniority while allocating housing quarters. Widows of public servants are entitled to three fourth of the pension of a diseased husband. Both spouses, if serving the Government can be posted in the same station. Paid maternity leave is 6 months for women. Some corporate offices are trying to incorporate such provisions in their policies.

154. The banking system provides loan facilities to all, including women for housing, business, an personal purpose. The collateral requirements for higher amount of loan often make women ineligible for lending as they lack assets to mortgage. Bank officials are not confident in lending to women. Women are also unaware of the procedures and requirements. Some bank managers require consent of the husband or other male relatives, as guarantors for lending to women, though it is not required by law. Some banks run "ladies branches" mainly to mobilize savings than to encourage investments.

155. The banks generally do not maintain sex-disaggregated data; therefore it is not possible to know the number of women clients or the volume of loans given to women. The banks or PFIs availing the refinancing facility from BB are now maintaining sex disaggregated information only for those schemes. The Labour Law also ensures equal benefits for women. Women are the main target group of the micro-credit base self-employment programmes of the NGOs and SSNPs. These programmes also include other services and training for empowerment of women.

Article 14: Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in Rural Areas

156. As majority of the population live in rural areas, the rural development strategy incorporates women's role in development. The National Agriculture policy 2013, the Livestock Policy and the Rural Development Strategy committed to ensure equal participation of the rural poor women in production of corps, fisheries, and livestock, agro-processing and agri-business activities.

157. **Social Protection**: The social protection projects target women in rural areas. The Allowance for Widow and Deserted Destitute has been expanded covering 0.92 million beneficiaries. The VGD, VGF, Maternal Health Voucher Scheme (MHVS), micro-finance have been expanded in rural areas. Some 65 per cent of the SPPs are seeking to address life-cycle related risks. Yet, there are significant gaps. BRDB organized 7227 cooperative societies with 255,406 women who have accumulated share amounting to 90.88 Million Taka, saved 209.46 Million Taka and has received loan amounting to 4708.75 Million Taka.

D. Part IV

Article 15: Equality before the Law and Civil Matters

158. Women are guaranteed equality with respect to men before the law in civil matters except for those covered under the personal laws. Adult women are eligible to conclude any contract of business, credit, real estate, purchase or sale of property, investment and other commercial transactions by themselves. As per law, courts treat women equally with men in respect of litigation, seeking legal counsel or aid, rights to sue and assert testimonial right. They can witness or execute power of attorney and can appear in the courts on an equal basis. Women can administer their property. However, social norms are still not in favour of women who go to court as accused or as plaintiff. The members of judiciary and the law enforcement agencies also do not have sufficient training on how to treat women victims. A Legal Aid Fund for poor people particularly women, has been established but due to lack of awareness and information, at times the fund remains inaccessible for women.

159. Women enjoy equal right legally to mobility, choice of residence, domicile and so on. In practice, women's domicile is determined by cultural norms and in most cases a woman resides with the father till her marriage, and after marriage she resides with her husband. When separated or divorced her domicile generally becomes that of her father or brother(s). Social norms generally require women to act according to the choice of the male members of their family. Women's mobility becomes restricted by the choice of the male members, social norms and the fear of being abused or harassed. In recent days more women are participating in public spheres and have become more visible. The unequal personal laws extend to the public sphere by norms requiring permission of males to executing contracts etc.

Article 16: Equality in Marriage and Family Law

160. The reservation on Article 16.1.c continued but in some recent cases the High Court directed on the basis of the Constitutional provisions and liberal and pragmatic interpretations of laws to protect women's rights particularly on age at marriage, payment of dower and maintenance before divorce. These demonstrate that there is scope for restricted application of laws that are inconsistent with the Constitution. The Government endorses the need to remove such incompatibilities taking into due consideration of the prevalent traditions and the need to prepare the society for ensuring acceptance of measures taken for reformation of the personal laws.

161. The Law Commission has submitted its recommendation on merit of withdrawal of the reservation, which is under consideration.

3. *Remaining and Emerging Obstacles and Measures Envisaged*

Optional Protocol

162. Bangladesh ratified the *Optional Protocol* on CEDAW during UN Millennium session in September 2000. Bangladesh is one of the ten countries to ratify the Protocol which enabled the Protocol to enter into force. The country has demonstrated strong commitments for implementing CEDAW by ratifying the Optional Protocol. Ratification of the Optional Protocol provided CEDAW with a legal basis to investigate complaints lodged by person/groups of Bangladesh.

Existing Challenges

163. The challenges include:

a. Mobilization against possible modification of the existing discriminatory personal laws and the customs and practices and implementing existing legal provisions.

b. Women's low labour force participation, ownership of land and control over productive asset and means of production, addressing needs of different women groups, and ensuring recognition of care work, wage equality and congenial work environment.

c. High maternal mortality rate, nutritional deficiency, child marriage and pregnancy and limited access to lifelong health services.

d. Women's low educational attainment, marketable education, capacity, support for finance, marketing, information and training for entrepreneurs.

e. Women's low participation in politics, leadership and decision making positions.

f. Balancing allocation of resources in social sectors and hard infrastructure. Limited capacity to implement GRB and purposive gender responsive planning.

g. Remaining gaps in collection, collation and use of sex disaggregated data.

h. Curbing VAW and trafficking of women, law enforcement and providing proper legal remedies to the victims.

i. Adverse effect of global climate change causing massive disruption of life and livelihood of people including women. The anticipated increase in terms of both frequency and severity of extreme events will increase environmental refugees where women will be affected and face loss of home, shelter and income.

j. Despite bringing new opportunities through ICT, the challenge is to manage the benefits of ICT and prevent ICT related VAW.

k. Capacity and resource limitation in promoting gender equality.

l. Some conservative religious groups active in the country, are not supportive of women's progressive development and empowerment. These groups, with their own interpretation of religious sayings hinder the efforts and initiatives. A continuous vigilance on these groups is a challenge.

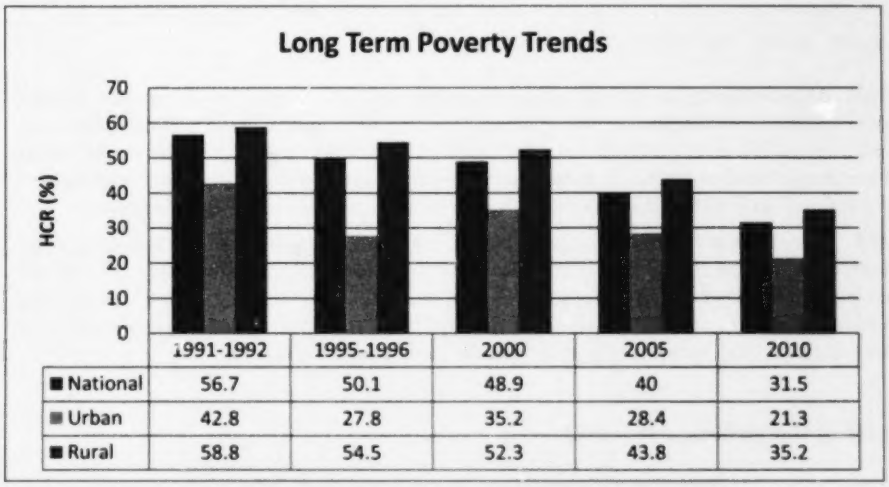
Outcomes of UN Conferences, Summits and Reviews

Beijing Platform for Action

164. Bangladesh implemented the BPFA, reviewed its implementation, and regularly submitted reports. The period 1995 to 2014 has seen economic growth led by increased agricultural production, exports, and remittances, and a growing productive population. The country suffered from climate change induced disaster, environmental degradation and shock due to 1997 Asian economic and 2007-2008 global economic crises. Conducive social development policies have yielded remarkable progress in poverty reduction and human development.

165. Progress in the twelve areas concern has been discussed against compliance against the Articles in the earlier sections. Some progress since 1995 that are assessed on the basis of multiple indicators are discussed below.

Figure 4
Long-term poverty trends (Headcount Ratio)

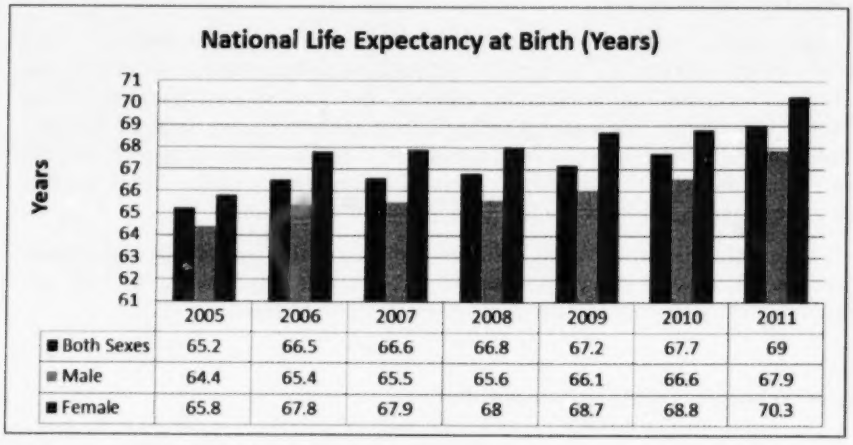


	1991-1992	1995-1996	2000	2005	2010
National	56.7	50.1	48.9	40	31.5
Urban	42.8	27.8	35.2	28.4	21.3
Rural	58.8	54.5	52.3	43.8	35.2

Source: Millennium Development Goals, Bangladesh Progress Report 2012.

166. Multi-dimensional activities on poverty reduction, food security, employment and services in health sector have contributed towards substantive increase of life expectancy at birth, an increase from 65.2 in 2005 to 69 years in 2011. Life expectancy for males rose from 64.4 to 67.9 and for females it rose from 65.8 to 70.3 years during the same period (SVRS 2011) compared to 58 years for females and 58.9 years for males in 1995 (BBS, 1996).

Figure 5
Life expectancy at birth



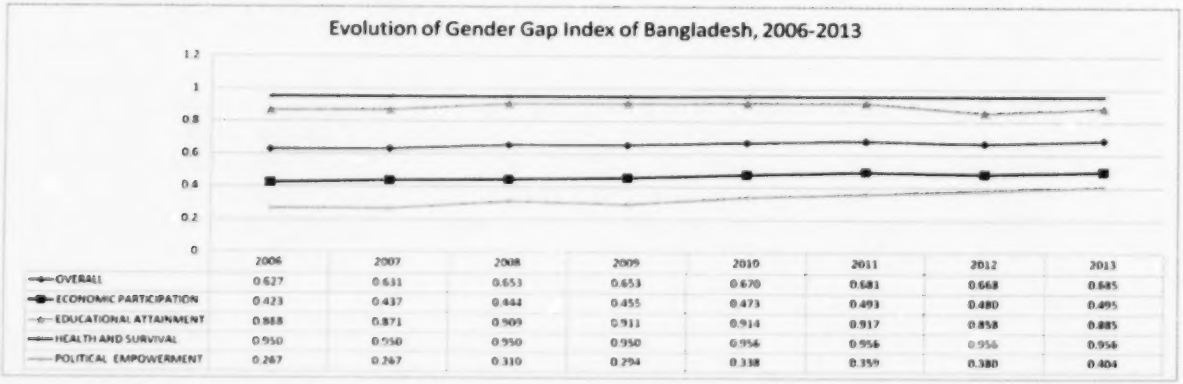
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Both Sexes	65.2	66.5	66.6	66.8	67.2	67.7	69
Male	64.4	65.4	65.5	65.6	66.1	66.6	67.9
Female	65.8	67.8	67.9	68	68.7	68.8	70.3

Source: Sample Vital Registration System 2011.

167. Achievements in health and education sector resulted in improved human development. According to the Human Development Index (HDI), Bangladesh has been identified as belonging to a group of highlighted 18 countries in the world which have seen rapid progress in human development. Bangladesh's HDI value increased from 0.312 to 0.558 in 2013 positioning the country at 142 out of 187 countries.

168. Increased access to and use of information and communication technology has increased connectivity, e-services as well as Information Technology (IT) based employment. Use of mobile phones and internet use has expanded facilitating improved access to information, knowledge, news, and services, interconnectivity and even income earning opportunities for both women and men.

Figure 6
Gender Gap Index of Bangladesh, 2006-2013



	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
OVERALL	0.627	0.631	0.653	0.653	0.670	0.681	0.668	0.685
ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION	0.423	0.437	0.444	0.455	0.473	0.493	0.480	0.495
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	0.888	0.871	0.909	0.911	0.914	0.917	0.858	0.885
HEALTH AND SURVIVAL	0.950	0.950	0.950	0.950	0.956	0.956	0.956	0.956
POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT	0.267	0.267	0.310	0.294	0.338	0.359	0.380	0.404

Source: Global Gender Gap Report, 2013.

169. In the Global Gender Gap Index calculated by educational attainment, health and survival, economic participation and political empowerment by the World Economic Forum, Bangladesh ranked 68 out of 142 countries in 2014 with a score of 0.697. Bangladesh advanced the most among the South Asian countries, keeping India, Pakistan and Nepal behind. There was a steady increase of the overall score 0.670 in 2010, 0.681 in 2011 to 0.685 in 2013 with a slight fall in 2012 to 0.668. The report attributed this increase to strong national commitment to better public health and education services, innovative poverty education programs, and strategic engagement in the world economy.

Factors contributing towards success

170. The strong partnership and cooperation with CSOs including development and advocacy groups and private sector has resulted in better delivery of services, especially in rural and remote areas. This has also contributed to Bangladesh being able to achieve the various successes discussed above.

171. Bangladesh has been involved in numerous cooperation initiatives at the national, sub-regional and regional levels to promote women's development, some of which were explicitly seeking to address the Beijing PFA. Bangladesh is an active member of SAARC Technical Committee on Women in Development, the Bali Process on Human Trafficking, People Smuggling and Other Related Crimes, SAIEVAC the network of SAARC Women Parliamentarians. Bangladesh and India have set up a joint task force for prevention of trafficking in children and women.

172. Bangladesh agreed on the collection and compilation of a minimum set of gender indicators as agreed at the UN Statistical Commission in 2013. Out of the agreed fifty two indicators, Bangladesh Government is collecting and compiling data for 47 different indicators through different censuses and surveys. A compendium of gender related statistics was published in 2014 by BBS compiling the statistics from different survey and censuses. The collection of sex disaggregated data provides a basis for assessment and planning for women's development.

Millennium Development Goals

173. Annex-F provides information with regard to the progress towards achievement of the indicators of MDGs. Bangladesh has already met targets of bringing down the poverty gap ratio to 6.5, against the MDG target of 8.0 and halving the population living under the poverty line (from 56.7 per cent to 29 per cent). Some indicators on gender equality are on track, some are not on track and some have structural and socio-cultural barriers to be in track in 2015. Several challenges need to be addressed in order to fully achieve the MDG targets and BPFA.

Others

174. The Government is reviewing the concept note on the draft general recommendation on older women and protection of their human rights as discussed at the 44th session of CEDAW Committee held in August 2009.